

Message Text

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21

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

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R 170353Z DEC 75

FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7114

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

AMCONSUL MELBOURNE

AMCONSUL SYDNEY

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE CANBERRA 8388

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: AS, PINT

SUBJECT: ALP LEADERSHIP STRUGGLE

1. SUMMARY: ALP LEADER WHITLAM IS RECEIVING STRONG SUPPORT FROM ALP STATE BRANCHES IN HIS FIGHT TO RETAIN LEADERSHIP OF THE ALP'S PARLIAMENTARY CAUCUS. END SUMMARY

2. BOTH THE VICTORIAN AND NSW BRANCHES OF THE ALP STRONGLY ENDORSED WHITLAM AS FEDERAL LEADER OF THE ALP ON DECEMBER 15. THE VICTORIAN ALP EXECUTIVE UNANIMOUSLY SUPPORTED WHITLAM AND URGED HIM TO LEAD THE PARTY AT THE NEXT ELECTION. VICTORIAN CHAIRMAN PETER BEDLICH SAID QTE THE STRONGEST POSSIBLE ACTION WILL BE TAKEN AGAINST ANY MEMBER OF THE BRANCH WHO CONTINUES TO INDULGE IN PUBLIC AND PERSONAL RECRIMINATION. END QTE. REDLICH'S WARNING WAS CLEARLY DIRECTED AGAINST FORMER ALP

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TREASURER JIM CAIRNS. THE BRANCH ALSO CONSIDERED

LAYING CHARGES OF DISLOYALTY AGAINST CAIRNS BUT DECIDED NOT TO DO SO AT THIS STAGE.

3. FORMER MINISTER FOR SCIENCE CLYDE CAMERON IS ALSO REPORTED TO HAVE CREATED PROBLEMS FOR HIMSELF IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA WHEN HE URGED WHITLAM'S REMOVAL.

4. MEANWHILE, DEPUTY ALP LEADER FRANK CREAN HAS ANNOUNCED THAT HE WILL CONTEST THE LEADERSHIP. MHR LIONEL BOWEN DID NOT DECLARE HIMSELF A CANDIDATE YESTERDAY AND IS REPORTEDLY THE NSW BRANCH OF THE ALP IS PRESSURING HIM NOT TO ENTER THE LEADERSHIP CONTEST.

5. A SPECIAL MEETING OF UNIONS AFFILIATED WITH THE ALP YESTERDAY URGED THE PARTY TO BACK WHITLAM AND TELL THE CRITICS TO QTE SHUT UP END QTE.

6. THERE HAS BEEN SOME CRITICISM OF ALP PRESIDENT HAWKE WHOSE SUNDAY CONVERSATION WITH WHITLAM KICKED OFF SPECULATION ABOUT THE PARTY LEADERSHIP. YESTERDAY HAWKE SIMPLY SAID THAT THE PARTY WAS IN GOOD SHAPE, THAT WHITLAM WOULD BE REELECTED AS LEADER, AND THAT HE BELIEVED IT WAS WRONG TO KICK A MAN WHEN HE WAS DOWN.
PERCIVAL

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Message Attributes

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To: STATE
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